

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

EB-07 IGA-01 /080 W

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R 131527Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9230

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

SECDEF

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 03889

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, UK, AV, SC, RQ

SUBJECT: DOG ISLAND PROPOSAL

REF: (A) STATE 5067L (B) LONDON 37L2

1. SUMMARY. POLITICAL COUNSELOR MET WITH FCO DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY SIR DUNCAN WATSON MARCH 11 TO FOLLOW UP U.S. REQUEST FOR HIGH LEVEL U.S./UK MEETING ON DOG ISLAND. WATSON UNDERSTANDS U.S. POLITICAL URGENCY TO SOLVE CULEBRA PROBLEM; UK WANTS TO HELP. BUT ST. KITTS/ANGUILLA CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM MUST BE SOLVED FIRST. THIS LOOKS VERY DIFFICULT BECAUSE BRADSHAW OF ST. KITTS AND WEBSTER OF ANGUILLA SHOW NO SIGN OF AGREEMENT ON STATUS OF ANGUILLA (AND CONSEQUENTLY DOG ISLAND) WHICH IS PREREQUISITE FOR FEASIBILITY OF U.S. PROPOSAL. UK IS WILLING TO MEET WITH U.S. TEAM TO DISCUSS TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND MODALITIES OF U.S./UK AGREEMENT. WATSON WANTS TO PARTICIPATE AND WILL ONLY BE AVAILABLE APRIL 14-25. END SUMMARY.

2. POLITICAL COUNSELOR AND EMBOFFS MET WITH SIR DUNCAN WATSON AND WEST INDIAN DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS COX AND ALLAN TO CARRY OUT INSTRUCTIONS REF. (A). WE STRESSED THE CONFIDENTIAL

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IMPORTANCE TO THE U.S. OF A SOLUTION TO THE CULEBRA CRI-

SIS AND SAID THAT THE PURPOSE OF OUR CALL WAS TO SUPPORT THE U.S. REQUEST FOR AN EARLY U.S./UK MEETING TO DISCUSS THE TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DETAILS OF THE U.S. PROPOSAL. WE NOTED THAT THE U.S. HAD AGREED TO KEEP THE TALKS CONFIDENTIAL
I.E. WE WOULD NOT INFORM THE PUERTO RICANS OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE DISCUSSIONS. WE STRESSED OUR HOPE THAT THERE WOULD BE HIGH LEVEL REPRESENTATION ON BOTH SIDES.

3. WATSON BEGAN HIS RESPONSE BY SAYING THAT HE FULLY UNDERSTANDS THE POLITICAL PRESSURE IN THE U.S. FOR A CULDEBRA SOLUTION. HMG WANTS TO BE HELPFUL. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, REAL PROBLEMS ON THE UK SIDE WITH THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ST. KITTS AND ANGUILLA OVER THE CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS OF THE ISLANDS. WATSON ACCOMPANIED JOAN LESTOR ON A TRIP TO ANGUILLA IN THE FALL OF 1974 TO REVIEW THE SITUATION. IT IS PERFECTLY APPARENT, HE SAID, THAT THE ANGUILLANS HAVE NO THOUGHT EXCEPT TO BE FINALLY AND COMPLETELY SEPARATE FROM ST. KITTS. THE PRIME MINISTER OF ST. KITTS, BRADSHAW, IS FIRMLY AGAINST SEPARATION (AND AGAINST ANY MILITARY USE OF ANY ISLANDS IN THE ST. KITTS, NEVIS, ANGUILLA GROUP). BRADSHAW IS TRYING TO DESIGN A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD INVOLVE ECONOMIC AID TO ANGUILLA AND SOME LOOSENING OF TIES BETWEEN ST. KITTS AND ANGUILLA BUT NOT A FINAL BREAK.

4. WEBSTER OF ANGUILLA WILL VISIT LONDON APRIL 8. HE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY PRESS FOR COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE. THIS MEETING WILL HAVE TO BE FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER MEETING WITH BRADSHAW. WATSON SAID THAT TO TRY TO TACKLE DOG ISLAND IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS COMPLICATED NEGOTIATION WOULD BE DISADVANTAGEOUS; WE WOULDN'T GET ANYWHERE WITH IT AND IT WOULD ONLY BE FURTHER COMPLICATED BY THE ADDITION OF BRADSHAW TO THE LIST OF PLAYERS.

5. THE BRITISH ARE TROUBLED BY DIRECT CONTACTS THAT HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE PUERTO RICANS AND THE ANGUILLANS. THEY UNDERSTAND THAT MUCH OF THE COMMUNICATION IS WITH GUMBS, ALLEGED OWNER OF DOG ISLAND. THE BRITISH
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DON'T KNOW IF HIS CLAIM TO OWNERSHIP IS VALID. AT SOME POINT THEY THINK THERE WILL HAVE TO BE A TEST OF THIS POINT IN THE COURTS.

6. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, WATSON SAID THAT IF THERE IS A PROSPECT OF MEANINGFUL PUERTO RICAN AID TO ANGUILLA, UK WANTS TO HELP AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. TO THIS END UK IS MOST ANXIOUS TO MEET WITH U.S. REPS. TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF AID

PROGRAM. THE UK ALSO WANTS TO START DISCUSSIONS ON THE TYPE AND NATURE OF A U.S./UK AGREEMENT TO ACHIEVE U.S. USE OF DOG ISLAND. FOR THE MOMENT IT WOULD NOT BE FEASIBLE TO HAVE AN AGREEMENT INVOLVING EITHER ANGUILLA OR ST. KITTS AS PARTICIPANTS.

7. IN LIGHT OF ABOVE, UK WILL WELCOME TALKS WITH U.S.

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 03889

WATSON WISHES TO PARTICIPATE HIMSELF. HE WILL BE TIED UP IN SEYCHELLES CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS NEXT WEEK. HE IS FURTHER BOOKED WITH OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF DEPENDENCIES UNTIL WEEK OF APRIL 14. SO HE HOPES U.S. CAN WAIT THAT LONG TO HAVE MEETING. WEEK OF APRIL 14 WOULD HAVE ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE OF FOLLOWING UK DISCUSSIONS WITH WEBSTER DURING PREVIOUS WEEK. MEANWHILE, FCO WILL ASK MOD TO PREPARE A PAPER ON TECHNICAL QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION IN U.S./UK MEETING. FCO WOULD GIVE US THIS PAPER PRIOR TO MEETING TO HELP US PREPARE FOR DISCUSSIONS.

8. COX STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF TALKS. UK UNDERSTANDS THAT U.S. MUST INFORM PUERTO RIC-

ANS THAT TALKS TAKING PLACE. THIS IS AGREEABLE. UK WILL HAVE TO INFORM WEBSTER AND BRADSHAW THAT TALKS TAKING PLACE SINCE BOTH WILL FIND OUT IN ANY CASE. BUT UK CANNOT DISCUSS SUBSTANCE WITH BRADSHAW AT THIS TIME WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING SUCCESS OF PROJECT. THIS IS REASON FOR CONFIDENTIALITY.

9. WATSON NOTED THAT IN COPIES OF WEBSTER LETTER TO COPAKEN OF COVINGTON AND BURLING RECEIVED BY JOAN LESTOR
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IT WAS CLAIMED THAT DUFF OF FCO SAID UK HAS NO OBJECTION TO A U.S./UK/PUERTO RICO/ANGUILLA MEETING ON A DOG ISLAND LEASE. WATSON SAID DUFF MUST HAVE BEEN MISQUOTED OR "GREATLY EXCEEDED HIS INSTRUCTIONS". UK IS FIRMLY OPPOSED TO ANY MEETING INVOLVING ANGUILLANS AT THIS TIME BECAUSE IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO INFORM BRADSHAW OF SUCH A MEETING. THIS CANNOT BE DONE AT PRESENT STAGE OF WORK ON ST. KITTS/ANGUILLA CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM.

10. COMMENT. WE FOUND THE BRITISH AT THIS TALK FRANK AND CONSTRUCTIVE. IT IS OUR JUDGMENT THAT THEY THOROUGHLY UNDERSTAND THE U.S. POLITICAL NEED TO REACH EARLY SOLUTION OF THE MATTER. THE BRITISH CLEARLY FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN THEIR PRESENT POSITION. THIS GOVERNMENT, WHICH ATTACHES PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE TO CORDIAL RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. ACROSS THE BOARD, IS ANXIOUS TO ASSIST US. AT THE SAME TIME THEY ARE WRESTLING WITH A DIFFICULT CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION WHICH HAS PLAGUED THEM FOR MANY YEARS. THEY WERE CANDID ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES OF FINDING EARLY SOLUTION TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION.

11. U.S. AUTHORITIES SHOULD REALIZE THAT THE TALKS PROPOSED FOR MID-APRIL WILL NOT PRODUCE A FINAL SOLUTION; THE BRITISH MADE THIS ABSOLUTELY CLEAR. THESE TALKS SHOULD, HOWEVER, HELP THE BRITISH TO MOVE AHEAD QUICKLY ONCE THE CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION IS SETTLED, AND THE READINESS OF U.S. OFFICIALS TO ADDRESS AS MANY POINTS AS THE BRITISH MAY RAISE WILL BE MOST HELPFUL. WE THINK THE BRITISH SUGGESTION TO HOLD THE TALKS THE WEEK OF APRIL 14 IS NOT UNREASONABLE. WATSON, WHO IS THE SENIOR FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIAL DEALING WITH THIS PROBLEM, WILL SIMPLY NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL THAT TIME. HE IS HIGHLY KNOWLEDGABLE IN ALL MATTERS CONCERNING CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS RELATING TO BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORIES AND IS PERSONALLY WELL DISPOSED TOWARDS THE .S. HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE TALKS WOULD DEFINITELY BE TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE USG. GIVEN THE PROSPECT THAT WATSON WILL HEAD THE BRITISH SIDE, WE THINK IT EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT A SENIOR OFFICIAL FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT ALSO PARTICIPATE

IN THE MEETINGS WITH THE BRITISH.

RICHARDSON

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